



THE SPHINX.

EGYPT.

Area, 361,125 square miles; nearly twice the size of Quebec; population, 5,584,000; or, including Nubia, Kordofan, Darfur, and the countries on the Red Sea and the White Nile, nominally subject to the Khedive, an area of 1,153,300 square miles, and a population of about 16,400,000.

Egypt Proper is bounded on the north by the Mediterranean Sea; on the west by Barca and the Sahara; on the south by Nubia; on the east by the Red Sea and Isthmus of Suez.

The great feature of Egypt is the Nile. Its course is through a long narrow valley enclosed by hills on each side, beyond which are sandy deserts. About 100 miles from the Mediterranean, it divides into two branches, forming a delta or triangle, each side of which is from 100 to 150 miles in length.

The climate is the driest in the world, rain seldom falling, and in summer the heat is excessive. The soil is very fertile where it is overflowed by the Nile, producing wheat, rice, cotton, barley, and sugar-cane in great abundance. Great efforts have lately been made by the Khedive to improve agriculture and manufactures, but hitherto without much success.

The country is governed by an hereditary Pacha or Khedive, nominally tributary to Turkey. The inhabitants are composed of native Egyptians (called Copts), Turks, Arabs, and a few Europeans, and were formerly much oppressed by their rulers. The prevailing religion is the Mohammedan.

The Isthmus of Suez, connecting Egypt with Asia, is on the great overland route between Britain and India. It is a sandy tract about 100 miles wide, with several depressions, forming shallow lakes of brackish water. French engineers have succeeded in constructing a canal to connect the two seas. A railway extends from Alex-

andria to Cairo, 131 miles, and from Cairo to Ismailia, on the Suez Canal, 91 miles.

Egypt is one of the most interesting countries in the world, from its connection with sacred history, and from its early civilization. Its pyramids, temples, and obelisks, with their hieroglyphics, which, owing to the extreme dryness of the climate, are admirably preserved, render it a favorite resort of travellers from all parts of the world.

Cairo (327,000), the capital, situated on the Nile, about five miles above the head of the Delta, is the largest city in Africa. It is poorly built, but its numerous and elegant mosques give it a fine appearance. Close to the city are the celebrated pyramids. *Alexandria* (166,000), on the coast, is an ancient city, originally founded by Alexander the Great, through which all the trade with Europe passes. Near it are Pompey's Pillar and Cleopatra's Needle. Here Euclid taught, 320 years before the birth of Christ. Here, also, Abercromby fell in 1801; and at Aboukir, 15 miles to the east, Nelson gained the famous battle of the Nile, in 1798. Alexandria was bombarded by the British fleet in 1882 and its forts almost completely destroyed. *Rosetta* and *Damietta* are considerable towns to the east of Alexandria. *Siout*, *Kenneh*, *Esneh*, and *Assouan*, in Upper Egypt, are principally trading-stations for the caravans. South of Kenneh are the ruins of *Thebes*, the ancient capital of Egypt, and the temples of Karnac, Luxor, and Denderah. In the oasis of *Sinaih*, 320 miles west of Cairo, are the ruins of the temple of Jupiter Ammon.